



COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY
PUEBLO

Guideline for Academic Program Self-study

**Adapted from models from Western Carolina University, the Western
Association of Schools & College, & Heartland Community College**

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Academic Program Self-Study

Introduction & Purpose

Academic program self-study is a component of the Colorado State University Pueblo strategic planning and institutional effectiveness process. The primary purpose of systematic self-study is to maintain and support academic departments: teaching and learning; research, professional, and creative activity; and university service, community service, and outreach. It's a vehicle by which departments can better understand if and how well programs are achieving their purpose and if not, what courses of action to take to make them more successful.

The program review process described in this guide represents a learning-centered, outcomes-based approach to on-going improvement and planning. It is designed as a useful meaningful inquiry into the program's purpose and its effectiveness in achieving that purpose. The results of the program review should be integrated into the department and campus process of planning and budgeting. It also includes an on-going, continuous plan of action the department can use for renewal and improvement.

The conclusions drawn from the program review are to be informed by evidence; that is, all claims about a program's strengths, weaknesses, and proposed improvements are to be supported by relevant, valid qualitative and quantitative evidence. This contrasts with program reviews that are largely descriptive and based on advocacy of the program. Consequently, responses to the standards for review included below should depend largely on evidence.

Although leadership at all levels is committed to improvement based on systematically gathered information, it is the faculty who take primary responsibility for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching and learning. The 2020 CSU-Pueblo *Faculty Handbook* describes the reasons for program reviews. Program reviews are to

- Assure that each academic unit will be afforded the opportunity to assess and evaluate its program outcomes [objectives], resources, curriculum, faculty, staff, facilities, students, alumni, and other programmatic considerations;
- Provide quantitative and qualitative information that will enable the program, college, and University as a whole to enhance their planning processes;
- Communicate to the Board of Governors program review results thereby assisting the Board in its efforts to provide informed governance and coordination. (1.2.6.2.c.6)

Academic Program Self-Study Goals

The goals of the self-study are to:

1. Develop and enhance high-quality academic programs that are aligned with the CSU-Pueblo mission statement and strategic plan and meet the educational needs of the region.
2. Encourage and support program self-improvement by highlighting program strengths, identifying opportunities for change, meeting the changing needs of stakeholders, honestly determining areas in need of improvement, and providing valid data for making budgeting decisions.
3. Provide a transparent and meaningful review of all graduate and undergraduate programs and certificates that results in systematic, actionable program improvements.
4. Foster meaningful faculty engagement in program assessment and planning to strengthen and improve the program.

Procedures for Programs with Professional Accreditation

Programs on a professional accreditation self-study cycle will complete the self-study required by the accrediting agency. The documentation used in the accreditation self-study for new or continuing accreditation may also be used for the campus self-study; however, the Provost, in consultation with the college Dean and Executive Director for Assessment & Institutional Effectiveness, will determine the need for an external review and evaluation based on accreditation requirements compared to campus requirements.

When using accreditation reports as the campus self-study documents, a Table of Contents will be submitted indicating the pages of the report that provide the information required by CSU Pueblo's self-study. Information absent from the accreditation report will be submitted as appendices and noted in the Table of Contents.

Procedures for Non-accredited Programs

Non-accredited programs will submit a self-study every six years, unless other arrangements have been requested and approved by the Curriculum and Academic Programs Board, the Dean, and the Executive Director for Assessment & Institutional Effectiveness. Requests for changes should be made in the year prior to the scheduled program review, if possible.

External Reviewers

For those programs with professional accreditation, external reviewers should be engaged consistent with the expectations of the accrediting agency. For all other programs, reviewers external to the CSU Pueblo campus will be selected. The Department Chair and/or Program Director should submit the names of a few potential reviewers and a brief summary of their academic and/or professional background to their college Dean. Potential reviewers are ideally from a high-quality program at a masters 1 regional or recognized peer institution similar to CSU Pueblo. From that list, a reviewer will be selected by the Provost in consultation with the college Dean. Invitations to the reviewer will be issued jointly by the Department Chair and the Dean. Expenses related to travel and honorarium for the external reviewer will be paid by the Office of the Provost.

Qualification of External Reviewers

Required credentials:

1. A terminal degree in the same or a closely related discipline as the program under review
2. Associate professor or professor rank (emeritus faculty are eligible if they had a recent academic position)
3. Does not hold an administrative position above department chair
4. Is not currently actively involved in research, teaching, or other professional projects with faculty in the program under review
5. A distinguished record of research, teaching and service in the discipline
6. An ability to conduct the review and submit a findings and recommendation report in the required timeframe
7. No close connection with any faculty member in the department

Preferred credentials:

1. A national reputation for contribution in the same discipline as that under review
2. Experience with program review and/or best practices in institutional effectiveness
3. Knowledge of or experience in a HLC accredited institution
4. Knowledge of or experience in professional accreditation of similar programs, if appropriate

The Self-Study Cycle

The self-study cycle will be coordinated by the Curriculum and Academic Programs Standards Board. Undergraduate and graduate programs in the same discipline will be reviewed simultaneously unless the Department Chair presents compelling reasons for separate reviews. The decision to review undergraduate and graduate programs separately will be made by the Provost in consultation with the CAP Board, Department Chair, Dean, and Executive Director for Assessment & Institutional Effectiveness.

Periodic consultation with the college or school Dean throughout the self-study process is expected. This will avoid the potential for significant revisions and additional information collection upon submission to the Dean.

Under special circumstances, the Provost may request self-studies outside the regular six-year cycle. Additional or early self-study will be conducted under such compelling circumstances as:

- The program is experiencing low productivity in terms of number of degrees awarded;
- The department faculty are not conducting systematic, authentic program assessment that results in improvement to teaching and learning; or
- Outside stakeholders such as the Colorado Department of Higher Education, the Colorado State University System, or the Higher Learning Commission, require it.

Annual Update

A brief, annual update on progress during the previous academic year toward action steps identified in the Action Plan will be included with annual assessment report due June 1 each year. This will be pre-populated with action plan for department. Department Chairs will share these annual updates with their faculty and Deans to inform annual program planning. Updates to the Academic Program Review and Action Plan are to be completed by Chair, reviewed by the Dean, and forwarded to the Provost's Office. This will include major accomplishments and challenges, changes to action plan or timeline, and updates to program accreditation where appropriate.

Program Review Timeline

Dates below are “strongly suggested” in order to remain on schedule, except for **Bold Due Dates** highlighted.

Date	Task	Responsible Party
January 15	Initial notification to departments	CAPB
February 15	Confirm program intent to submit review or submit request for delay with letter of support from Dean	Department Chair/ Program Coordinator/ Dean
March 1	CAPB decision on delay forwarded to department, Dean and Provost	CAPB, Provost/Assistant Provost
April	Chairs and Deans are briefed at CAPB meeting. Initial IR data is made available. Further data in early November (final spring semester).	CAPB Chair & IR office
September 1	Comments on self-study draft	Dean
October 1	List of potential external reviewers generated and submitted to Dean and Provost	Department Chair/Program Coordinator
October 15	Self-study draft submitted to Dean	Department Chair/Program Coordinator
October 15	External reviewer selected in consultation with Dean and chair	Provost
November 1	Final IR data available	IR Director
November 15	Final self-study submitted to Dean	Department Chair/Program Coordinator
December 7	Update program review progress	Initiated by CAP Board Chair
	In response to email request from CAPB Chair: submit checklist	Response from Dean, Department Chair/Program Coordinator
December 15	Self-study forwarded to external reviewer Seminar panel selected	Dean Dean and CAPB
December-January 31	External reviewer visit on campus	Department Chair/Program Coordinator, external reviewer
December-February 15	External reviewer report submitted to Dean	External reviewer
February 15	External reviewer report submitted to Chair and forwarded to seminar panel (Materials posted on I: drive)	Dean
14 days prior	Seminar panel meeting scheduled	Dean
NLT than February 28	Seminar panel convenes Submit 2nd checklist	CAPB

March 1	Dean's summary draft sent to seminar panel members	Dean
March 8	Dean's Summary Report and Action Plan submitted to CAPB (Materials posted on I: drive)	Dean
March 8-March 31	Program review, external evaluator's report, and Dean's report presented to CAPB for approval	CAPB
April 14	Final report submitted to senate	CAPB Chair & Senate Rep
April	Vote on report during last senate meeting	Senate
April	Program Review Schedule submitted to Board of Governors for approval in May	Provost
June-August	All documents associated with Program Review archived on CAPB I:drive or website	Provost's office
June 1	Annual Update of Program Review Action Plan progress submitted to Provost's Office	Department Chair/ Program Coordinator
July	Executive summary of program review submitted to Board of Governors for approval at Aug Meeting	Provost
July 30	Discussion of updates with Dean and Assistant Provost	Department Chair/ Program Coordinator
	Presentation to President's Cabinet	Department Chair/ Program Coordinator

NLT= not later than

Contents of Self-Study

- I. Cover Page
 - A. Program name
 - B. Program college/school
 - C. Year of review
 - D. Date self-study submitted
 - E. Name of program Chair
- II. Department Chair Summary (maximum of two pages)
 - A. Key findings
 - B. Department aspirations
- III. Response to Review Standards 1-4
 - A. Response to each review standard
 - B. Supporting documents and data
- IV. Supporting Documents
 - A. External Reviewers Report
 - 1. Program strengths
 - 2. Program challenges, areas for improvement
 - 3. Summary of recommendations
 - B. Dean's Seminar Review Panel results summary and Action Plan

Program Review Standards

This section requires a comprehensive response to each standard listed below. The standards are arranged thematically to contextualize the review in the larger planning and effectiveness framework of the campus. Evidence should be included as appendices and referenced in the body of the review. The potential evidence lists below are suggestions only.

Standard 1. The program reflects and supports the mission of its school or college and the strategic vision of Colorado State University-Pueblo and the mission

Please reflect on the following:

1. Scope of the program
2. The primary strengths (including its distinctive aspects) and challenges of the program
3. Alignment with mission of school or college
4. Alignment with Vision 2028

Potential Evidence: program mission

Standard 2. The program provides and evaluates a high-quality curriculum that emphasizes student learning as its primary purpose.

Please reflect on the following:

Curriculum

1. Alignment of the curriculum with disciplinary standards
 - a. Rationale for selection of the curriculum
 - b. Sequencing of courses (including adherence to pre- and co-requisites)
2. Course objectives are aligned with the program's student learning outcomes
3. Curricular support for and/or by other programs, as applicable:
 - a. Multi- or interdisciplinary offerings
 - b. General education courses

- c. Service courses (courses required by other programs)
4. Internal processes employed by the program to modify the curriculum (including involvement of faculty, students, alumni, and other program stakeholders)
5. Curriculum changes since the previous self-study program review are in alignment with program goals.

Potential Evidence: Syllabi, advising sheets, four-year planning sheets, meeting minutes, external mandates

Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

1. Summarize the annual assessment reports submitted since the previous self-study program review including documentation of program improvements.
2. Student learning outcomes are observable, measurable statements of what students will know or be able to do upon completion of the program.
3. A statement of course objectives that reflects the expected student learning outcomes of the program is present in all syllabi, including general education course offerings.
4. Assessment measures effectively evaluate the student learning outcomes and results are consistently being used to inform curricular decision-making.

Required Evidence: Annual assessment reports submitted since previous self-study program review, assessment plan with curriculum map

Standard 3. Resources and administrative structure facilitate achievement of program goals.

Please reflect on the following:

1. Qualifications of faculty (full-time, part-time, instructional staff) for teaching in the program
2. Composition of faculty in terms of demographics, tenure, and diversity.
3. Faculty involvement (shared governance) in ongoing program and disciplinary and pedagogical activities such as assessment; curriculum development, review, and revision; strategic planning; and tenure and promotion standards.
4. Evidence of equitable workload (instruction, advising, scholarship, service) among faculty
5. Effective and appropriate use of non-faculty staff

6. Effective and appropriate leadership
7. Adequacy of facilities and laboratories, instructional technology, and library resources to support program goals
8. Program costs.

Potential Evidence: CVs or recent activity list, summary of teaching, scholarly, creative, and service activities, items in Program Review Data Dashboard, description of equipment (physical, technological, books) strengths and weaknesses, minutes of relevant department meeting(s)

Standard 4. The program retains and graduates well-prepared students.

Please reflect on the following:

1. Diversity of students in the program
2. Enrollment patterns relative to institutional and national enrollment patterns, and projected future program viability
3. Accuracy and consistency of student advising, mechanisms to monitor progress toward degree and use of training to provide quality advising
4. Opportunities for students to engage in faculty research, independent study, study abroad, internships, honors courses, student organizations and other enriching activities that promote retention and graduation
5. Resources and methods to recruit and retain high-quality students
6. Student performance on licensure or professional exams relative to regional and national standards, if applicable

Potential Evidence: Items in Program Review Data Dashboard, alumni/employer survey responses, Admission requirements

Seminar Panel, Action Plan, Cabinet report and Annual Updates

Seminar Panel

- A. The role of the seminar panel: After reviewing the self-study and the External Reviewer's Report, a Seminar Panel discusses the reports and their associated observations, findings and recommendations.
- B. Members of the Seminar Panel should include:
 - Dean
 - Department Chair/Program Coordinator
 - Provost and/or Provost's representative
 - CSU Pueblo CAP Board representative
 - Optional members:
 - Other members of the department/program
 - Off-campus community member
 - Other faculty

All members should have a working knowledge of the degree program.

- C. Seminar Panel Meeting and Discussion
 - Dean with the assistance of the Department Chair/Program Coordinator sets date, time and place for the Seminar Panel meeting.
 - Members should read all the pertinent documents – self-study, external reviewer's report, chair's response to external reviewer's report, etc. Members should come prepared with questions about the program.
 - Focus of the Discussion:
 - Quality of Program
 - Assessment
 - Centrality to Mission
 - Need and Demand with reference to capacity
 - Cost
 - External Mandates
- D. Dean's Seminar Panel Report summarizes the discussion at the meeting and includes the Program Action Plan.

Action Plan

- A. The Program Action Plan is prepared by the Dean and Program Chair/Coordinator
- B. Focus of the Action Plan
 - No-cost initiatives for the next five years
 - Low-cost initiatives for the next five years with proposed funding sources
 - Major cost initiatives for the next five years with proposed funding sources
- C. Include projected timeline and responsible person(s) for each item

Presentation to CAPB and Cabinet

Program Chair/Director will present a summary of the report and action plan to the CAPB in the review year and then to the President's Cabinet in the following year. Please format this brief summary to include the following:

- Progress on action plan items from previous program review cycle
- Program Strengths
- Program Challenges
- Implementation of Recommendations in current action plan
- Progress on new program implementation, if applicable
- Resource Needs for all parts of program-what is appropriately covered, what is needed
- Budget Needs for program, including proposed funding sources